

**Historic building recording and monitoring and
recording at Higher Uppacott, Poundsgate,
Devon**



on behalf of
Dartmoor National Park Authority

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OAKFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

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Summary

Oakford Archaeology were commissioned by Dartmoor National Park Authority in August 2015 to undertake archaeological monitoring and recording at Higher Uppacott, Poundsgate, Devon (SX 7013 7287). The works took the form of a watching brief during the stripping of the interior of the historic longhouse, including the removal of modern structures at the north end of the house and the creation of a new external doorway for disabled access. The observations led to a reassessment of the development of the building, particularly the sequence and dating of the insertion of floor structures and partitions within the formerly open volume of the longhouse.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for the Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) and sets out the results of a historic building survey and archaeological monitoring and recording carried out by Oakford Archaeology (OA) between September 2015 and January 2016, at Higher Uppacott, Poundsgate, Devon (SX 7013 7287). The work was carried out as a condition of listed building consent (0032/15) and planning permission (0033/55), granted by DNPA for refurbishment and repairs, rethatching and removal of inappropriate late 20th century repairs or alterations.

1.1 The site

Higher Uppacott is an exceptionally well preserved longhouse lying within the Parish of Widecombe in the Moor, Devon, on an upland site just north of the hamlet of Poundsgate. The building, part of which has been the property of the DNPA since 1979, and part has been acquired as recently as 2002, currently serves both as a residence and as a visitor attraction.

A Conservation Management Plan produced by Keystone Historic Buildings Consultants (Keystone K848, January 2014) has identified the building both as a site of high significance (it is listed Grade 1) as an exceptional example of a specific type of traditional upland dwelling (the only such dwelling open to the public) but also as an underused resource whose historic fabric is currently suffering as a result of well-intentioned but unfortunate alterations carried out in the 20th century.

These alterations, including the lining of the internal walls with concrete block walls and bitumenised cladding seem to have been aimed at ‘tanking’ the building against the penetration of damp, but are now believed to be the cause of many conservation problems. They are therefore being removed and the historic fabric of the longhouse revealed and repaired. The aim of the project is to better utilise the building as a community resource, to better understand its development and to present and conserve the historic fabric for posterity.

1.2 Geological background

The site lies on high land north of the river Dart. The geology of the area is granite, formed approximately 271 to 307 million years ago in the Permian and Carboniferous periods, and overlain by clay, silts and peat deposits (BGS Sheet 326).

2. AIMS

The aim of the project was to ensure the adequate recording of any historic fabric exposed and to investigate and record any buried archaeological deposits exposed during groundworks associated with the development, to inform details of the proposed works, to report on the results of the project, as appropriate, and to disseminate the results of the investigation by appropriate reporting and deposition of the archive in a public repository, or online with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

3. METHODOLOGY

The work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by OA (2015), submitted to and approved by the Dartmoor National Park Authority Archaeology Officer (DNPA AO) under listed building consent and the planning condition, prior to

commencement on site. This document is included as Appendix 1. Guidance on the scope of work required was outlined by the DNPA in a brief dated 30-06-2015.

3.1 Building survey

Recording of the buildings was undertaken by a historic building specialist in accordance with specifications applicable to Level 3 in the English Heritage 2006 document *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practices*. The building recording consisted of:

- A detailed written description of the buildings and more general record of the main building.
- A detailed photographic record of the buildings in colour (digital) format, and basic record of the main building.
- A limited drawn record of the buildings, consisting of annotation of, and additions to, the architect's 'as existing' plans and elevations, to show the locations of any fixtures and fittings, building breaks, blocked openings or architectural detail.

3.2 Groundworks

The standard OA recording system was employed. Stratigraphic information was recorded on *pro-forma* context record sheets and individual trench recording forms, plans and sections for each trench were drawn at a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and a detailed digital photographic record was made. Registers were maintained for photographs, drawings and context sheets on *pro forma* sheets.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 General background

Higher Uppacott is a Dartmoor longhouse lying a short distance to the north of the village of Poundsgate in the ancient manor of Spitchwick. The manor of *Spicewite* was held by Earl Harold prior to 1066. During the Norman reorganisation of the land holdings following the Conquest (recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086), and the death of Harold at Hastings, the land became a royal manor held by King William.¹

Nothing is known of the early history of the property until the reign of Edward III (1327–1377) when a Ralph de Uppecote is mentioned in a subsidy roll in 1330.² No further reference is made to Uppacott until 1418 when, in a charter of feoffment, Abraham Thomas granted to William Bearde a messuage, tenement and lands in Uppecote.³ Unfortunately it is unclear from either document whether they refer to Higher or Lower Uppacott.⁴

4.2 Higher Uppacott

The property is clearly mentioned for the first time during a session of the manor court on the 13 October 1727 when it passed into the ownership of Richard Fursland. Mary inherited Higher Uppacott on the death of her father in May 1730 and on her death in 1747 it passed to her husband, John Arnell. By 1789 the property had been leased to Walter Wendeatt, who also rented Lower Uppacott from Lord Ashburton. By 1789 Walter Hamlyn had taken on the tenancy and continued to live there until his death in 1839.⁵

¹ Thorn and Thorn 1985, 1.43.

² Gower 1932.

³ Keystone 2002.

⁴ Keystone 2002.

⁵ Keystone 2014.

The tithe survey of Widecombe-in-the-Moor parish took place in 1844 (Fig. 2), revealing that the property had passed to William Creed. The map clearly shows the main house and a large building built onto the east end of the parlour wing, clustered around a central courtyard. Located on the south side of the yard is a large rectangular building. The property, along with a number of fields to the north and west, was occupied by Richard Hamlyn.

By the early 1850's Higher Uppacott was occupied by John Warren. The 1851 census provides the following description of the site and its occupants 'Higher Uppacott: John Warren, 68, married, living with his wife Ann, 58, and son John, 30, William 25, Martha 23, Aaron 16'. The next census in 1861 reveals that John now farms at Higher Uppacott with his daughter Cecelia and her husband Richard Rowe.⁶

The 1871 census revealed that the property was occupied by John French, his wife Agnes and three children, while the presence of two families in the 1881 census might suggest that Higher Uppacott had by this time been divided into two properties.⁷

The area was mapped by the Ordnance Survey in 1886, when the property was shown in the greatest detail thus far (Fig. 3). The property was leased throughout the 1890's and into the early 20th century to successive agricultural labourers and their families.⁸

On the death of John Arnell Creed in August 1903 Higher Uppacott passed to his niece Gwendoline Carr. The property was occupied by the Caunter family and remained remarkably unaltered throughout the early 20th century, as is evidenced by a number of photographs taken at this time.⁹ On her death in 1944 the property passed to her sister, Elspeth Carr, who subsequently sold Higher Uppacott to Thirza Axford in 1967.¹⁰

The property was bought in 1978 by Devon County Council and subsequently by the Dartmoor National Park Authority between 1979 and 2002.

5. PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

Higher Uppacott has been the subject of two separate archaeological reports provided for the DNPA by Keystone, the first in March 2002 and the second in August 2013, in addition to the Conservation Management Plan mentioned above. These reports were undertaken without the benefit of invasive works into the fabric of the building, and the interpretation of the historic development of the house was therefore based upon the fabric visible at the time, together with documentary research and parallels drawn with other examples of vernacular buildings in the area. The conclusions of the Keystone report can be summarised as follows:

The longhouse at higher Uppacott developed in its present form in five historic phases, and was then subject to repairs and alterations in three later phases. The main historic phases identified by Keystone include:

Phase 1. An early 14th-century rectangular longhouse consisting of a shippon to south and house to north entered through a shared cross passage. The house consisted

⁶ Keystone 2014.

⁷ Keystone 2014.

⁸ Keystone 2014.

⁹ Keystone 2014.

¹⁰ Keystone 2002 and 2014.

of a hall and inner room, which were separated from the cross passage and shippon only by low screens. Heating was by an open fire in the centre of the hall, the smoke from which blackened the roof throughout the length of the building. One truss from this roof survives, supported by raised crucks and with a triangular yoke at the apex supporting a square-set ridge of which a short length remains. One side purlin survives. The rest of the roof has been replaced. The hall was lit by a high window which survives, now blocked, in the east wall. The dating of this phase is based upon stylistic comparison with other roofs of similar form, dated by dendrochronology to the early C14th.

- Phase 2.** An early 16th-century remodelling of the house in which the domestic end of the building was reconstructed with a higher roof level, supported by A-frame trusses with short wall posts and notch-lap-jointed collars. The separation of the domestic and agricultural parts of the building was improved by a stone cross wall to the north of the cross passage. The domestic part of the house remained of a single storey only, heated by an open hearth in the hall which sooted the whole length of the new roof of the domestic part of the building. Dating evidence for this phase is provided by the smoke blackening of the thatch and roof timbers over the hall and part of the inner room, which shows that the rooms at this stage remained heated by an open hearth; and also by the form of the trusses, which incorporate unusual carpentry details, including notched-lap jointed collars which, though more common in post-medieval contexts, are known from some 16th-century contexts in other buildings in the south-west region.
- Phase 3.** A mid-late 16th-century phase of remodelling in which the inner room at the north end of the building was improved by the addition of a first-floor structure and separated from the hall by a close-studded partition rising to collar level. The partition had a gap at the apex which allowed heat and smoke to percolate into the new chamber from the open hearth, which remained in place in the hall. The partition is smoke-blackened on both sides and is unusual for Dartmoor in that it is formed of close studding with grooved sides into which cleft laths are slotted, the narrow vertical panels thus formed being rendered with pure lime plaster. This technique appears in urban contexts such as Exeter in the early-mid 16th-century but is highly unusual in rural areas. This observation and the particular type of plaster utilised form the basis of the dating of this phase to the mid-16th century.
- Phase 4.** A further phase of mid-late 16th-century improvements in which the hearth in the hall was relocated to a handsome new fireplace and chimney with a showpiece stone wall featuring a plinth and cornice facing the cross passage and a timber lintel with a high relieving arch facing the hall. The cornice in the cross passage supported a loft or platform over the western entrance of the passage, which did not extend the full width of the shippon. The dating of this phase is difficult owing to the lack of reliable dating evidence on stylistic grounds and the intervention is thus dated to the mid to late 16th century on the basis of its relationship with the former and succeeding phases, outlined above and below, and to the general pattern of development of rural farmhouses in Devon, as it is currently understood.

Phase 5. An early-mid 17th-century phase of development in which a new first floor was inserted in the hall, blocking the original east window and obscuring the relieving arch of the fireplace. The west window of the hall was also altered at this date since it, too, conflicted with the new level of the hall ceiling. The alterations created a new, unheated, first-floor chamber at the centre of the house accessed by a stairway from the inner room and a new doorway from the inner room chamber. Dating for this phase is provided by the scratch mouldings of the doorway to the new chamber. In around the same phase, or perhaps a little later, a new, two-storey parlour wing was added extending eastwards from the north end of the house. This wing is dated to the mid-17th century on the basis of the carpentry details of its roof.

Later works. In subsequent centuries the majority of the roof of the shippon was removed and replaced, leaving one bay only of the original 14th-century roof intact. The first-floor chambers were ceiled at or near collar level and the northern part of the roof was also replaced. In the 18th or 19th century the house was divided into two tenements, lean-to structures were built against its east wall and, finally the cross passage was enclosed from the shippon by a late 19th- or early 20th-century screen. In the late 20th and 21st centuries the house was acquired in two phases by Devon County Council, and remains subdivided into two parts, one of which is still occupied as a private dwelling.

6. THE BUILDING SURVEY

6.1 Introduction

The building survey took place in September and November 2015, during the removal of modern plasterboard, partitions and stud walls. The stripping out of the building permitted closer inspection of the historic fabric of the house, and allowed the identification of areas that contained original features and areas where these had been replaced. These areas and relationships had not previously been visible to Keystone. The new evidence recovered during these works has required the re-interpretation of the sequence of development of the farmhouse and has substantially changed the earlier interpretation outlined above (Section 5).

The rooms of the primary house are described in this account from north to south, returning finally to the north to examine the parlour wing which is believed to be a later addition. It must be stressed that, with the exception of the shippon and the hall, the original functions of the rooms, whether for storage, dairying, cooking, entertaining or sleeping, are not known and their usage may have changed over time. The terminology adopted here, therefore, is modern, based upon Keystone's terminology. The ground floor rooms are thus labelled: 'inner room', 'hall', 'cross passage' 'shippon', and 'parlour' and the first-floor rooms distinguished from these by the suffix 'chamber', for example: 'inner room chamber', 'hall chamber', 'parlour chamber' etc.

6.2 The ground floor rooms

6.2.1 *The Inner Room*

The stripping of the interior began with the clearance and removal of modern fabric in the inner room, the ground-floor room at the north end of the house. At the time of the recording the inner room was divided by concrete blockwork walls into four separate areas; a bathroom, a

kitchen and a small lobby alongside the base of the stairs, with two narrow cupboards, north of the stairs, in the north-eastern corner of the range. These divisions were modern and cut across a window in the west wall, providing two very narrow and awkwardly-shaped rooms besides confusing the historic plan of this area. It was proposed to remove these walls to restore, as far as possible, the original plan of the building and to reinstate the first floor structure at its historic level, which was then understood to be lower than the present floor level, closer to the level of the floor structure over the hall.

Floor structures

The stripping of the interiors began with the removal of the modern plasterboard ceilings of the rooms and of the cupboards at its north-eastern corner (Pl. 1). Concealed above the modern plasterboard ceilings was a sheet from the *Mid-Devon Advertiser* dated Friday February 8th, 1991 which may well have been placed there deliberately to provide a date for the installation of the ceilings. Underneath the plasterboard, the joists of the first floor structure proved to be of modern softwood, of small scantling, measuring 0.1 x 0.05m. These joists ran across the top of the modern concrete wall dividing the kitchen from the bathroom, and were supported on the modern lining of the north wall, parts of which were constructed of pale cream modern bricks laid in a hard cement mortar. The joists and the bricks were clearly of mid-to-late 20th-century date; much more modern than had been expected. The thick stone cross wall forming the partition between the hall and the inner room was clad with a very hard cement render which appears to have been intended as waterproofing against the moisture generated by the bath and shower. This was applied directly over the earlier stone wall.

The north wall and the dividing wall proved to be constructed of concrete blockwork, the former overlying a polythene sheet covering the original stonework. Unfortunately, no historic plaster or whitewash was preserved and it must be assumed that this was removed as part of the preparations for the ‘tanking’ of the room with polythene. The removal of the concrete walling revealed the original masonry of the north wall to be undisturbed by any sockets for an earlier floor structure (Pl. 2). There was no sign either of a large socket for an axial beam running from north to south, to support joists running from east to west, or of smaller sockets for joists running from north to south to meet a beam aligned east/west. As it had been expected that the removal of the modern cladding would reveal evidence of previous floor structures, this absence was unexpected.

It had been assumed, on the basis of comparison with many comparable buildings, that the inner room would have been floored over prior to the flooring over of the hall, at an early date in the history of the building, probably in the mid-to late 16th century (Keystone’s Phase 3). In fact, no provision for an earlier floor level in this part of the building could be identified either above, below, or corresponding with the present floor level. There is no trace of discolouration on the timber partition to the hall chamber to show a floor at a higher level, and no sockets, supports or ledges for a floor below the present floor level. Although some kind of earlier floor level contemporary with the 19th-century staircase must surely have existed, the means of support for even this late structure is not known; it must be presumed to have been borne, like the modern floor structure, on modern walls or studwork built within the shell of the earlier house. The absence of an historic floor level in this area and the relationship of this room with the hall ceiling structure and first-floor partition (discussed below) has necessitated significant re-interpretation of the development of the house.

The absence of any provision for an earlier, historic floor structure, suggests that the present floor structure, and probably also its conjectured 19th-century predecessor, must have been

inserted into a formerly open volume. The relationship with the historic first-floor structure of the hall, further, showed that *contra* Keystone's interpretation (outlined above) the hall was in fact the first part of the house to be storeyed. The evidence thus suggests that that the inner room was not storeyed until a very late date in the history of the house.

6.2.2 *The Hall*

The hall ceiling and jetty

In the hall, the first-floor joists supporting the floors and ceilings are lightly-chamfered oak timbers, with straight-cut stops, running from north to south. The cross beams supporting these joists run from east to west and are decorated with stepped, notched run-out stops. As one of these beams is seated in the blocking of the earlier hall window, in the east wall of the room (Pl. 3), it is clear that the whole hall ceiling is an insertion into the original open volume of the house. The same stops also appear on the lintel over the doorways in the north wall of the hall, opening on to the staircase and inner room, which suggest that these doorways are contemporary with the ceiling.

Removal of modern plaster on the south face of the cross wall between the hall and the inner room also revealed that the joists are stopped on the line of this wall, respecting its south face, and that they either continue over the wall top to project beyond it, or rest upon it without projecting further. The joists are set at intervals of roughly 0.4m (centre to centre) and are regularly spaced with no signs of replacement. They are notched and housed over the lintel of the inner room doorway (Pl. 4), proving that they are also contemporary with the lintel of the doorway. It was possible to establish that the lintel of the doorway is not part of a continuous beam running the width of the house. The lintel cannot, therefore, be interpreted as the head of an earlier timber screen on the line of the wall, but must be contemporary with the wall and part of it. These details reinforce the conjecture that the hall ceiling joists and the cross wall are contemporary.

Most unusually, each alternate joist projects over the wall top beyond the north face of the dividing wall, to form a shallow jetty projecting to the north, supporting the first-floor timber partition between the hall chamber and inner room chamber (Pl. 5). This partition is supported on a horizontal jetty bresummer resting on the ends of each alternate joist. The jetty projects out not into the hall, as is usually found in Devonshire farm houses, but rather into the inner room. Furthermore, the jettying of the hall chamber over the inner room, rather than the inner room over the hall, demonstrates that the flooring over of the hall must pre-date the insertion of any first-floor structure in the inner room, which must have been open to the roof long after the hall was storeyed.

Stripping of modern cladding in the hall

Stripping out of the modern dry lining of the hall revealed that the modern linings of the walls within the hall were applied over battens nailed or drilled to the walls, over which was applied a curious bitumenised cloth, presumably intended as damp proofing. Beneath this the wall surface was covered with a thin layer of polystyrene sheet, glued to the earlier plaster surfaces. Beneath the polystyrene were many layers of paint and plaster, with decorative finishes usually in shades of white, green or cream and traces of 19th- and 20th-century wallpapers. The polystyrene was no doubt also intended as damp-proofing but had in fact exacerbated the problem; the wall behind and the plaster surfaces upon it were saturated with moisture and the plaster finishes were in many places blowing away from the masonry. No trace was observed

of historic wall paintings, though evidence for these may of course yet be concealed beneath many subsequent layers of paint and plaster.

The external doorway

Removal of the modern cladding on the east wall of the room has revealed that the recess containing a modern cupboard and shelves near the foot of the main staircase concealed a blocked doorway opening at the angle between the hall and the parlour wing. The door had been blocked in stone, but the original door frame and even the original door had been retained when the door was blocked, the door having simply been closed and the masonry walling built up against it. The door had since rotted away, but the mortar of the blocking had splurged onto its surface and thus many details of the door, its appearance, construction and decoration had been preserved as a reflection or an imprint (Pl. 6; Fig 7).

The door was hung in a stout oak, square-headed frame, without mouldings internally. The external edges of the jambs and lintel were embedded in the stonework and could not be inspected. The frame was of pegged construction and retained one very large 'L'-shaped pintle driven into the rear face of the northern jamb. This revealed that the door had opened inwards into the hall. The door was constructed of three substantial planks, with their edges butted together and masked by two vertical fillets. These fillets were decorated with mouldings; either a recessed chamfer between two square fillets, or some form of shallow ogee, the precise detail and profile being impossible to determine. The fillets were applied to the outer face of the door, and seem to have been interrupted by the hinges, rather than passing over them, though this detail was also rather uncertain. The hinges could be traced as a slight impression in the mortar, which showed that they had stood proud of the surface of the door, rather than being let in flush with the surface, as is sometimes the case. The hinges were long metal straps with oval expanded ends, of a type known from late 16th- and 17th-century contexts in Exeter. As the door had completely perished no evidence was available for the appearance of its face to the hall, and it could not be established whether the door was a sandwich of boards held together by studs or nails, or whether it was of plank and batten construction with horizontal battens to its rear face.

The extremely large pintles suggest that this door was very heavy and substantial; as it faced outwards, towards the courtyard, it is highly improbable that it served merely as an access to the lean-to extension on the eastern side of the main range of the house. Rather, the door was expected to be approached from the courtyard side. It may in fact have been the principal entrance to the 'polite' part of the house, as opposed to the cross passage, which, as shall be shown was actually a part of the shippon. Although the jambs had been disturbed to accommodate the modern cladding of the recess, there was no evidence to show that the doorway had been cut into earlier masonry. It thus seems probable that the entire wall was rebuilt to contain both the doorway and the adjacent window, at a time when the hall was still unenclosed and open to the roof. This alteration may have been made to provide a new entrance to the house for humans alone, separate from the access for animals to the shippon. A likely context for this would be the insertion of the fireplace in the hall in the 16th century.

The bench at the north end of the hall

The demolition of the modern hall bench at the high end of the hall revealed that the modern hall bench was constructed over a stone plinth or seat 0.74m in height and 0.25m in depth (Pl. 7). No sign of a historic wooden seat overlying this was revealed, though it is all but certain that this arrangement formerly existed, as the seat is otherwise too narrow to provide a comfortable perch. No original plaster survives on the north wall and no trace of fixings for a

bench back were observed; it is probable that any such evidence was removed when the historic wall claddings at this end of the room were removed to allow for modern damp-proofing. The small cupboard recess above the back of the former bench retained no evidence for a door or hinges; its function remains uncertain.

6.2.3 *The Cross passage*

The modern screen to the shippon

The cross passage was separated from the hall by the beautifully-constructed granite ashlar rear wall of the hall fireplace, with a stone corbelled cornice and a doorway communicating with the hall to the east (Pl. 8). On the opposite side, the passage was enclosed from the shippon by a timber screen constructed of early 20th-century boarding, with a central doorway closed by a plank-and-batten door (Pl. 9-10). This screen was entirely of early 20th-century or modern construction and contained no evidence of earlier fabric. Examination of the beam crossing the building at the north end of the shippon showed no evidence of any enclosure below the beam and it is therefore suggested that the shippon and the cross passage were not originally separated, but were one space. The discovery of an early doorway to the hall, described above, suggests that from an early date, and probably before the flooring over of the hall, the house had been provided with separate entrances for animals and humans, though the hall and the shippon remained connected by a wide doorway, part of which still remains.

Removal of the modern timber screens of the cross passage has revealed the north side of the beam alongside the passage (Pl. 11). One half of this beam has seven deep joist sockets apparently for a platform supported upon joists resting on the chamfered stone corbel course built into the back of the hall chimney stack. Associated with these sockets is a groove or chase in the top of the beam which may have been connected with a boarded parapet or some other vertical structure. Although the platform appears to have sloped downhill with the shippon, with the parapet at the foot of the slope, it remains possible that it served as a sleeping platform for farm hands, who would thus have been in a convenient position for attending to the cattle, while also benefitting to some degree from the warmth of the adjacent chimney as well as that of the beasts. A single socket, further to the east, may represent the remains of an access stair or ladder to this loft or platform, though the relationship of this ladder with the cross passage remains unclear.

Openings to the cross passage

The western doorway of the cross passage has been entirely replaced, but the eastern doorway survives intact. This has a shallow oval head supported by two jowled-headed jambs. The relationship of the doorway with the jamb stones supporting the one surviving true cruck truss over the shippon roof shows that the doorway is probably contemporary with the roof truss and therefore probably of 14th-century date.

Examination of the doorway from the passage to the hall shows that this lies within the remains of an earlier screen, which may have incorporated a very wide doorway to the hall. This doorway was also supported by jowled-headed posts, but the detail of the chamfering of the lintel suggests that it had a shouldered arch with a square head rather than an oval arch like the main entrance. This screen may also be of 14th-century date and may represent the remains of a plank and muntin screen crossing the full width of the building and providing an impressive entrance to the domestic areas from the agricultural parts of the house. The screen appears to have been cut and truncated when the present chimney was inserted into the hall, probably in the 16th century. The eastern jamb has since been lost and is now built up in later stonework,

while the shouldered arch of the doorway has been cut away and modified to accept a conventional rectangular opening. The cladding within this opening was not removed and the precise position of the eastern jamb, which might be betrayed by a mortice in the underside of the lintel, could not be established.

The removal of the concrete floor of the cross passage revealed that the exposed floor (Pl. 12-14) was at least in part continuous with that of the shippon (see below).

6.2.4 *The Shippon*

The shippon remains unenclosed, as it was first built and, as no alterations were undertaken to this area beyond the removal of the modern partitions defining the cross passage which may have exposed the original form of the shippon (Pl. 15), few new observations were made in this area. The principal intervention was a photographic survey of the cobbled floor surfaces undertaken for Oakford Archaeology by Simon Hester, formerly of Survey Support, the results of which are noted below.

6.2.5 *The Outshuts and the Parlour Wing*

The outshuts to the east of the main house remained filled with furniture at the time of the survey and could not be examined in any detail. The parlour wing also remained occupied and, though access to this area was allowed by the tenant, no new observations were made in these areas. Evidence from the first floor rooms, however, suggest that the outshuts were added to the east face of the house in place of an earlier projecting structure, probably representing a porch over the main doorway to the hall and probably rising to two storeys. This structure seems to have served either to support a small porch chamber over the main entrance to the hall or, perhaps, a form of communication linking the hall chamber to the room over the parlour wing. This structure was probably demolished in the 19th century when the stairs to the first-floor rooms were reconfigured and new access was provided from the inner room chamber to the parlour chamber. The outshuts also may date from this time and suggest that the principal aspect of the house was changed from the east, facing the farmyard, to the west, towards the garden.

6.3 The first floor rooms

6.3.1 *The inner room chamber and staircases*

As has been shown above (Section 6.2.1) There is no evidence to show that any form of first floor existed at the north end of the house, over the inner room, at least until the insertion of the present 19th-century staircase. It must be admitted that neither is there any evidence of a floor contemporary with this staircase. It is therefore argued that the inner room was not historically storeyed and that the creation of the present inner room chamber took place at a very late date in the history of the house. Reconciling the absence of an historic floor level in the inner room area with the presence of doorways at first-floor level opening onto both the hall chamber and the parlour chamber is thus a problem.

Access to these first-floor doorways must have been from a structure within the inner room; however, this need not be assumed to be a full floor structure, particularly as the level of the thresholds of the first-floor doorways do not agree. The threshold of the blocked door into the parlour wing is at a higher level than the floor of the present inner room chamber, and the doorway to the hall chamber has a lower threshold than the present floor. This doorway also has a very low lintel, which would preclude a floor structure at a higher level than the present one. Since the level of the thresholds of the doorways do not agree, it follows that one or the

other must have been approached by steps and that neither doorway can help determine the height, or date, of the first floor in this area; both doorways might have been accessed from an open stair, with landings at different heights, rising within the open volume of the house in the manner of an internal gallery to the threshold of each doorway.

The staircase and structures beneath it

The present stair, though much altered, is presumed to be of 19th- or 20th-century date and must pre-date the present modern floor of the inner room chamber. It rises steeply to the north and alterations to the floor levels and to the treads and risers show that it is not in its original state. In its present form the stair may represent a 19th- or 20th-century remodelling of an earlier structure, for which some evidence remains in the area of cupboards beneath.

Incorporated within the substructure of the staircase is a wooden post, seated on a tall stone base (Pl. 16; Fig. 6). This appears to pre-date the present stair. At the base of the post its eastern face is cut with a substantial lap joint, 0.04m deep, angled as though to accept the base of a diagonal timber or brace rising towards the screen of doorways between the hall and the inner room. This may conceivably represent the string of a very steep stair or stair ladder, rising in the opposite direction to the present stair. The ladder appears to have been angled towards a point just below the level of the present jetty and it remains unclear how the stair or ladder can have provided access to the hall chamber without a very awkward scramble at the top over the jetty bresummer and the threshold of the first-floor doorway, or without conflicting with the two doorways. It is conceivable that the post has been rotated or moved from its original position, and reused at the base of the present stair. Alternatively, the stair may have been a complex structure rising around the post and with branches off to reach landings or platforms within easy reach of the first-floor doorways to the hall chamber and parlour chamber. Complex forms of timber newel stair with many tight turns and branches, are known from 16th-century houses in Exeter, Bridgwater and in northern Brittany and it is evident that access to the upper storeys of early vernacular houses was often more tortuous and constricted than would be acceptable today. Though the form of this stair cannot be determined with confidence, in the absence of any further evidence, there can be little doubt that the principal stair stood in this position from the time of the flooring over of the hall and that it rose in the form of an open gallery within the open volume at the north end of the house until its replacement with the present stair.

6.3.2 *The hall chamber*

The hall chamber lies over the hall and is lit by a single window in the east wall. The room was probably formed in the mid-17th century by flooring over the original open volume of the hall. The hall chamber was originally open to the apex of the roof, which must have been replaced in its present form when the hall was storeyed. This is the likeliest context for the raising of the roof, and would also be consistent with the carpentry details of the present roof structure. The hall chamber appears to have been unheated, and was separated from the open volume of the inner room by a stud partition with plastered panels, jettied out into the inner room on a bresummer supported by the alternating long and short joists of the hall ceiling.

The floor of the chamber, consisting of very wide boards, was preserved a short distance below the present floor, beneath modern joists and floor boards. If this was the original floor (and there were no obvious rebates or other signs of earlier boarding), the boards ran across the backs of the joists at right angles to them and not parallel with them, as suggested by Keystone (Keystone 2004, 35). An earlier floor may have existed, but no evidence for this was exposed by the works.

The hall chamber partition

The timber partition between the hall chamber and the inner room chamber is a close-studded structure of vertical muntins rising to half lap onto the hall side of the roof truss between the two rooms (Pl. 17). The ‘display’ side of the partition, with the neatest carpentry, thus faces the inner room, rather than the hall as might normally be expected. The vertical studs of the partition are halved onto the underside of the truss below the collar, leaving the apex of the truss above the collar open (Pl. 18). Though some of the carpentry is crude, it is probable that it is contemporary with the existing roof. As the inner room, rather than the hall, was still open to the roof when this partition was inserted, the soot blackening on both sides of the truss and the light smoke blackening in the central part of the roof is thus more likely to represent the percolation of smoke from an open hearth in the inner room to the hall than *vice versa*, as suggested by Keystone on the basis of the evidence then available (Keystone 2014, 33).

The vertical muntins or studs of the partition are rectangular and generally unmoulded, but grooved in their side faces to take substantial cleft laths which are slotted into the grooves one above another and then covered with a white lime plaster. Investigation of the doorway in the partition, opening from the hall chamber to the inner room chamber and stairs, shows that it is a primary feature of the partition, rather than an insertion, as previously assumed (Keystone 2014, 38). The western jamb of the doorway appears integral with the rest of the partition, yet there is no groove in its eastern face for a further panel of laths, therefore there must always have been an opening east of this timber. The south face of this western jamb, facing towards the hall chamber, is scored with a groove for cleft laths, as though the partition turned at right angles at this point. This suggests that there was a further partition or *spere* extending to the south of the main partition, into the hall chamber. A socket cut through the western jamb near the head of the doorway and retaining the butt end of a sawn-off tenon (Pl. 19), may represent the tenon at the end of head beam of this spere, which thus does not appear to have risen the whole height of the room. The timber did not project north of the partition and was therefore not connected with the structure of the stair. The doorway is decorated with scratch mouldings typical of the early to mid-17th century, which extend higher than the lintel and must therefore have been applied before the partition and the doorway were assembled.

The head of the doorway is formed by a horizontal timber pegged into the western jamb, extending beyond the eastern jamb towards the eastern principal rafter. On the north side of the partition, just to the east of the eastern jamb of the doorway, is a small blocked socket or housing in the upper side of this timber which is not expressed on the southern side of the partition; it seems likely that this was connected with the structure of the staircase. Confusingly, the evidence for hinges suggests that, rather than opening into the hall chamber, the door was hinged at the eastern jamb to open outwards into the void of the inner room. How this worked in relation to the staircase remains uncertain, but provides further indications that the structure of the lost stair was more complex than a simple stair ladder, from which operating a door that opened outwards would have been difficult, if not extremely perilous.

The partition or spere within the hall chamber appears to have been of the same construction as the main partition and therefore it is likely to be contemporary with it. The spere may have formed part of a small internal porch or lobby within the hall chamber, providing increased privacy and draught-proofing for the hall chamber, or it may have formed part of a circulation area off the chamber. Internal lobbies of this type were often used to shelter several doorways, providing a route between areas of the house, not unlike a corridor, which would impinge as little as possible upon the privacy of the chamber through which the route passed.

The window in the angle of the building with the adjoining parlour wing opened into this screened area and cannot therefore cannot have lit the chamber (there must have been another window lighting the hall chamber, for which no evidence now remains beyond a hint of a blocked rectangular feature in the west wall). As the window does not appear to have been intended to light the chamber, it is considered possible that it was not originally a window, but formerly a small doorway, opening upon a projecting porch chamber over the main entrance to the domestic part of the house. Oddly angled sockets in the lintel of this window may represent either redundant sockets within a reused timber, or perhaps some remains of this projecting structure.

The evidence for an internal porch within the hall chamber implies a complex circulation area in this position. The conjectured porch may well have contained a small room or closet, perhaps large enough for a servant's lodging or a study. The room may perhaps have contained a close stool or could have been used as a dressing room. It is also possible that the porch room provided a connection between the first-floor chambers in the two wings. If the ground-floor doorway, immediately below, was the principal entrance to the house, some form of storeyed porch or parvis might well be expected in this position to mark the entrance and provide an impressive frontage to the domestic part of the house. Porch and parvis structures were relatively common in vernacular houses in the 16th and 17th centuries. A similar timber porch, supported on a turned timber post, survived over the main entrance of the 16th-century Bampfylde House in Exeter until its destruction in the Second World War, and more modest examples remain in St David's Hill, Exeter, and at Langford, near Cullompton.

6.3.3 *The Parlour Chamber*

The Parlour wing is understood to be an addition to the original house, providing two extra heated rooms on each floor. This part of the house remains in the occupation of a tenant and thus was not stripped out or examined in detail as part of the present project. Both the ground- and first-floor rooms in this range have been provided with fireplaces, both of which have timber lintels. Although the ground-floor lintel may be a replacement (Keystone 2004) the upper one is decorated with chamfers and nicked-ogee stops. The provision of heating suggests (unless these fireplaces are both later insertions) that these rooms in this range were of higher status and more comfortable than most of the other rooms in the house, excepting the hall. The rooms may have been of higher status than even the hall chamber, which was certainly always unheated.

The parlour chamber is at present divided into two rooms and is accessed by a ?19th-century timber newel stair from the ground-floor room below (Pl. 20). It formerly had a further doorway opening at first-floor level to the inner room chamber, or at least to the putative stair and gallery structure within the inner room, but this has been blocked. Unfortunately, the date of neither the creation nor the blocking of this doorway could be established with certainty. The modifications to the staircase and the creation of this opening to provide direct access from the parlour chamber to the inner room chamber may well have been made following the demolition of the conjectured porch chamber and the blocking of the former main doorway below it, presumably in the 19th century. Both existing sets of stairs and the closure of the parlour chamber door presumably date from the period following the conversion of the house to two dwellings in the 19th century.

6.3.4 Roofs

The shippon roof

The earliest part of the present roof has been identified by Keystone as the smoke-blackened true-cruck truss with a yoke for a square-set ridge, lying immediately south of the cross passage, which Keystone have dated on stylistic grounds to the early 14th century (Pl. 21). This is the only truss which survives of the original roof; however, this truss, part of the ridge and a single smoke-blackened purlin extending from its northern face, are sufficient to fix the original height and pitch of the roof. The rest of the roof of the shippon has been replaced, probably in the 18th or early 19th centuries, with simpler 'A'-frame trusses resting on rebuilt stone walls.

The hall roof

The roof over the hall chamber is also a replacement, rising to a higher level than the earlier roof, and with distinctive carpentry features which suggest a mid-17th-century date (Pl. 22). This roof, as has been argued above, appears to be contemporary with the flooring over of the hall to create the hall chamber, but probably post-dates the addition of the hall chimney, which may have been built through the original 14th-century roof structure, in an open and unfloored volume. This is suggested by the relieving arch over the lintel of the fireplace, which is cut across by the beams of the existing first-floor structure, and also by the stone cross wall alongside the chimney, when seen from the shippon, which seems to reflect the original, rather than the later profile of the roof.

The flooring over of the hall provides the most likely context for the rebuilding of the roof, since this allowed the raising of the eaves to create extra headroom. The roof appears to be contemporary with the stud partition and jetty towards the open volume of the inner room and with the arrangements for a stairway beyond this. The roof has substantial notched-lap joints linking its collars, and is smoke blackened. Although Keystone considered, on the basis of the smoke blackening and parallels elsewhere, that the partition and trusses were likely to be of 16th-century date, it now seems more likely that the new roof and the partition, with its scratch mouldings, are of early to mid-17th-century date, and that they were blackened by smoke percolating through from the inner room through the void area at the apex, rather than in the other direction.

There are clear signs that the roof was again altered while the inner room was still unfloored, and while an open hearth was still in use in this area. Overlying the eastern principal of the truss incorporating the partition is an extra principal rafter raised above the earlier truss (Pl. 23). This appears to have been added to ease the transition of the roof with that over the parlour wing. This alteration may have involved the replacement of most of the rafters on the east side of the roof. The additional principal rafter is also smoke blackened, which demonstrates that the inner room was still open to the roof, and heated by an open hearth, at the time the parlour wing was added.

The roof over the inner room

The roof over the inner room has largely been replaced, probably in the 19th century. The reason for this alteration is not known but may be connected with the insertion of a floor over the inner room, or the raising of the roof over the parlour wing to a slightly shallower pitch, perhaps in order to improve headroom in the parlour chamber. The replacement roof over the north end of the house is not smoke blackened, but it does incorporate smoke blackened timbers, either reused in this position or, in the case of one surviving, heavily sooted purlin, surviving from the secondary roof over this part of the house.

The roof over the parlour chamber

The roof over the parlour chamber was briefly inspected and proved to be supported by an 'A'-frame truss with a plain, straight collar linking the two principal rafters (Pl. 24). This truss was of superior carpentry to the replacement trusses over the north end of the house and is certainly earlier. The roof structure had clearly been ceiled just below collar level since the lower parts of the principals were whitewashed but, above this, the truss was also smoke blackened. As the parlour wing has two storeys, both heated by apparently contemporary fireplaces, it is unlikely that the smoke blackening originated from an open hearth within this wing, rather that the apex of the roof must, like the hall chamber, have been linked to the open volume of the inner room chamber by a void area in the partition between them. This confirms that the inner room, rather than an open hearth in the hall, is likely to be the source of the smoke blackening throughout the whole of the northern part of the house.

6.3.5 *Dendrochronology*

Tree-ring analysis of samples taken from oak timbers in the shippon was undertaken in 2002 with the aim of determining the date of the primary roof at Higher Uppacott. Unfortunately the tree-ring analysis did not correlate with chronologies from Britain or Northern Europe (Tyers 2003).

In light of the technological advance in dendrochronology since the previous samples were taken 13 years ago, and the inherent problems with stylistic dating of building phases apparent from the recently undertaken works, we would recommend that new samples should be retrieved from the medieval roof truss in the shippon, the east doorway into the shippon, the remains of a suspected timber screen forming the doorway into the hall from the shippon, the ceiling trusses in the hall and the partition studs on the first floor.

7. THE WATCHING BRIEF

7.1 **Introduction**

The internal works involved excavations for the removal of existing concrete surfaces and the construction of new floors in the cross-passage, hall and the inner room. The work entailed excavation to a maximum depth of 0.2m below existing floor und level.

7.2 **The cross-passage**

Following the removal of the concrete flooring and the underlying make-up deposit the remains of a heavily disturbed cobbled surface was uncovered (Fig. 8, Pls. 12-14). This consisted of small to medium size granite cobbles on a bed of sandy clay that overlay the natural subsoil. Most of the surface had been heavily disturbed, presumably by livestock, and only a small area behind the east door was well preserved. A line of larger, elongated granite rubble stones on the south line of the cross-passage is likely modern and laid out to retain the 1970's concrete floor.

Although a number of 19th-20th century glass and pottery sherds were recovered it is likely that the cobbled surface is much earlier.

7.3 **The Hall**

Removal of the concrete flooring in the hall and excavation of the underlying deposits exposed a simple sequence. A mid orangey yellow growan natural subsoil was identified at a depth of 0.1m below internal ground level. This deposit was overlain by a 0.07m thick layer of mid-

reddish brown silty clay. No finds were recovered from this deposit. This deposit was in turn overlain by a 0.03m thick layer of light yellowish white lime mortar.

7.4 The inner room

Excavation of a trial hole against the north wall revealed groyan directly underneath the 0.18m thick concrete floor.

8. DISCUSSION

The major discovery as a result of the recent works has been that the first-floor structure of the inner room is not, as had previously been assumed, a historic structure (Keystone 2014, 109), but an entirely modern softwood construction of 20th-century date, borne upon the concrete block walls inserted to divide the room into two, presumably after 1979. Removal of the ceilings and wall cladding in the inner room showed no visible evidence of a historic floor level preceding this one. It had been presumed that the stumps of historic joists projecting over the wall dividing the hall and inner room represented the sawn-off ends of the joists of an historic floor structure at a slightly lower level than the present one. In fact, these proved to be the ends of the joists of the hall ceiling; they had not been truncated, but were arranged to project over the partition wall, to support the sill beam of the first-floor partition between the hall chamber and inner room chamber, in the form of an internal jetty.

The joist ends are notched over the head beam to the doorway and alternate in length, a highly unusual feature not paralleled, to the authors' knowledge, in any other Devon farmhouse. The shorter joists are supported on the head beam and on the stone wall dividing the hall and the inner room, while the longer joists project beyond this to provide support for the jetty bresummer of the partition above. The whole structure of ceiling in the hall, stone wall and timber partition above dividing the upper part of the building must therefore be contemporary, conflating two at least of the phases previously identified by Keystone (Phases 3 & 5). The hall must now be interpreted as having been storeyed before the inner room, and the inner room must have remained open to the roof long after the hall was ceiled. Since the floor structure in the hall seems, by its relationship with the present hall chimney, to post-date the fireplace and chimney, there must have been an earlier phase in which the hall was not storeyed, but was heated by a fireplace, and in which the inner room was heated by an open hearth.

This observation requires re-assessment of the smoke-blackening of the roof of the hall, and of the remains of the smoke-blackened roof of the inner room. The previous interpretation of an open hearth in the hall continuing to deposit soot upon the roofs of hall and inner room chamber through a large vent in the apex of the partition must now be reversed. It is clear that the soot blackening in the hall roof could equally have been deposited by a hearth in the inner room, rather than the other way round, and that it may have percolated into the hall chamber through the vent in the apex of the partition between from the inner room. Although most of the roof over the north end of the house (and perhaps some of the walling) has been replaced, there is still evidence of sooted timber in this area, suggesting that an open hearth remained in use within the inner room until a late date. This hearth, rather than one in the hall, may have resulted in the smoke blackening of the hall roof and both sides of the timbers of the hall partition. The smoke blackening over the hall can therefore no longer be assumed to pre-date the insertion of the floor in the hall.

The present roof over the domestic part of the house might have been added at the insertion of the hall chimney; however, the most likely context for the raising of the roof to its present

height is the creation of a storeyed element within the hall, in a phase post-dating the addition of the chimney. It is, thus, arguable that even the dating of the roof structure may now be reinterpreted as significantly later than has previously been assumed.

The addition of the present roof might reasonably be conflated into the same phase of development as the addition of the hall chamber floor and partition. It is thus suggested that the Keystone's phases 2, 3 and 5 can be interpreted as a single phase of remodelling, post-dating Keystone's phase 4, which may perhaps follow phase 1. It is suggested here that the present roof over the hall was erected as part of a general remodelling of the domestic end of the house, involving the raising of the roof levels to incorporate a storeyed hall and hall chamber, and a full-height kitchen in the inner room, heated by an open hearth. The roof is thus probably contemporary with the close-studded partition and with the hall chamber floor, but later than the chimney.

The eastern slope of the roof has been raised well above the level of the surviving 14th-century purlin, the end of which can still be seen within the wall between the shippon and the hall chamber. The western slope of the roof appears not to have been so drastically altered, but the ridge level, as shown on Keystone's long section of the house (Keystone 2014 Fig. 13) is significantly different. Examination of the stonework of the stack, above the present hall chamber ceiling, shows an offset in the masonry around 0.5m below the present ridge. This might represent the height of the ridge of the medieval roof at the time when the stack was first inserted, and the masonry above this an addition to the chimney after the roof was raised. Closer examination of the masonry might well clarify this relationship.

The best dating evidence for this phase of remodelling of the house comes from the doorway from the hall chamber to the inner room chamber. This doorway has previously been assumed to be an insertion into the partition dating from the 17th century, but it now seems likely that it is integral with the partition. The mouldings of the doorway are shallow scratch-mouldings dating from the mid-17th century, and the rest of the partition, the roof structure and the floor of the chamber with its internal jetty may be assumed to be of the same date. There is evidence for an internal porch or lobby projecting within the hall chamber, formed by a partition of identical construction with the rest of the partition, and this is certainly in a position to respect the doorway. The evidence for the porch or lobby survives in the form of a narrow groove in the western jamb of the doorway and a socket for a headbeam extending southwards. This evidence shows that this porch was constructed in the same manner as the partition wall, with cleft laths set in a close-studded frame. This reinforces the conclusion that the hall floor and partition are contemporary.

Since the internal porch appears to conflict with the window in the hall chamber, it is probable that another window must have been provided lighting the chamber. Although evidence for this is not conclusive it seems likely that this is in the west wall of the house close to the chimney breast, where a possible rectangular feature is just visible externally.

The porch may have simply provided some sort of draught proofing for the hall chamber; however, it is also possible that it sheltered several doorways, one of which communicated with a lost porch chamber, and perhaps thence to the parlour wing. Porches of this type often served to provide communication between several doorways, while maintaining privacy within the chamber through which they passed. A reconstructed example can be seen in the ground-floor parlour at St Nicholas Priory in Exeter, allowing communication between the former hall and the kitchen without impinging on the parlour.

The first-floor doorway to the hall chamber appears to have been reached by a staircase or ladder rising within the inner room. The configuration of this is not understood, but it seems that the remains of this arrangement survive in the form of a wooden post built into the underside of the modern stairs, resting on a large stone pad, and with a diagonal halved joint at the base. This may have accommodated a timber string rising diagonally, at a steep angle, towards the internal jetty. This timber, now removed, may have supported the treads or rungs of the ladder. It is presumed that a notch at the head of the post supported a timber trimmer which sustained a platform or galleried structure from which one might enter the hall chamber.

Investigation of the roof space above the inner room chamber shows that the eastern slope of the roof has been raised by the addition of a large rafter above the secondary 'A'-frame of the hall chamber roof, raising the roof still further above its medieval pitch. This timber is also smoke blackened. The evidence here would suggest that the roof at the north end of the house was raised in a further phase of alteration post-dating the addition of the hall chamber floor and partition, at a time when the inner room remained open to the roof and heated by an open hearth. The most likely context for this alteration would be the addition of the parlour wing to the north east of the original inner room, which has a higher roof level. This addition may thus be interpreted as a distinct phase of development from the creation of the hall chamber, separating Keystone's phase 5 into two separate phases. It is possible that the platform or gallery giving access to the hall chamber was extended to provide access to the upper floor of this wing through a blocked doorway. Alternatively, some other provision for access, such as a doorway to the putative porch chamber in the angle of the two wings, above the blocked doorway in the east wall of the hall, may have been provided.

The blocked ground-floor doorway in the east wall of the hall was simply blocked by building the new stonework against the face of the original door. The original door-frame and one of the pintles for the hinges remains, and the mortar of the blocking has preserved the impression both of applied vertical fillets and the hinges of the door. The door must have been constructed of three vertical planks, joined by shallow vertical fillets, and was no doubt cross-planked internally; it may have dated from the 16th or 17th century. The hinges were bolted to the eastern face of the door, which opened inwards, hinged at the northern jamb. The fair face of the door thus faced the farmyard, rather than the hall, as one might expect if this doorway had merely opened into a lean-to structure or dairy in the form of an outshut against the east wall of the hall. The door perhaps provided a polite entrance to the house separate from that of the cross passage, which remained the entrance for the animals. This may have been a particularly desirable arrangement if the shippon was still not partitioned off from the medieval cross passage, as seems highly likely.

9. CONCLUSION

The five historic phases identified by Keystone may now be revised in the light of the previous observations as follows:

- Phase 1. An early 14th-century rectangular longhouse consisting of a shippon to south and house to north entered through a shared cross passage. The house consisted of a hall and inner room, which were separated from the cross passage and shippon only by low screens. Heating was by an open fire in the centre of the hall, the smoke from which blackened the roof throughout the length of the building. A second hearth may have existed in the inner room, since this room remained heated by an open hearth until a late date in the history of the house.

One truss from the original roof survives, supported by raised crucks and with a triangular yoke at the apex supporting a square-set ridge of which a short length remains. One side purlin survives. The rest of the roof has been replaced. The dating of this phase is based upon stylistic comparison with other roofs of similar form dated by dendrochronology to the early C14th.

Phase 2. An early 16th-century remodelling of the house in which the domestic end of the building was remodelled by the insertion of a new hall chimney with a timber lintel surmounted by a relieving arch. The chimney may have been built through the original roof structure of the house, which remained un-storeyed at this period. The fireplace was associated with a stone wall separating the domestic and agricultural parts of the building, trapping the original purlins of the 14th-century roof and incorporating a fragment of an earlier timber screen dividing the hall from the cross passage. The chimney also supported a platform over the cross passage, providing either a dormitory for farm hands or a place for storage. The east wall of the hall was rebuilt at this time, incorporating a tall window, which survives in the east wall though now blocked, and adjacent to this a new main entrance doorway to allow direct access from the farmyard to the hall, separate from the access to the shippon. The domestic part of the house remained of a single storey only. It is likely that the inner room remained heated by an open hearth and that it functioned as a kitchen whereas the hall was the principal reception room.

Phase 3. In this phase, probably in the mid-17th century, the house was substantially remodelled by the insertion of a floor over the hall to create a hall chamber. The tall windows of the hall had to be blocked at this time to provide bearing for the new first-floor beams, and the granite dressings of one of these windows may have been reused to create a smaller two-light window in the west wall. The insertion of a new upper storey necessitated the replacement of the roof, which was rebuilt at a higher level, supported by A-frame trusses with short wall posts and notch-lap-jointed collars. A new stone wall was built between the hall and the inner room to support the ends of the joists of the hall ceiling, which jettied out into the inner room to support a close studded partition rising into the roof structure. The partition had a gap at the apex which allowed heat and smoke to percolate into the new chamber from the open hearth in the inner room, which blackened the partition and roof timbers on both sides. The new hall chamber was otherwise unheated. The hall chamber appears to have been reached by a staircase or gallery rising within the open volume of the inner room, and by a small lobby screened off from the hall chamber by a further partition. It is possible that this lobby also gave access to a porch chamber or parvis within a projecting structure over the main entrance to the house. Dating evidence for this phase is provided by the form of the trusses, which incorporate unusual carpentry details characteristic of the 17th century and also by the scratch mouldings of the doorway to the former staircase.

Phase 4. In a further 17th-century alteration a new, two-storey parlour wing was added extending eastwards from the north end of the house. This wing contained two heated chambers. Its upper storey may have been accessed by a new branch from the stair gallery or, perhaps, by a doorway in its south wall opening into the putative porch chamber and served by the staircase in the inner room via an

internal porch within the hall chamber. The roof of the parlour range is also smoke blackened, presumably because it, too, had a partition open at the apex towards the inner room, to allow smoke to percolate through. The parlour wing is dated to the mid-17th century on the basis of the carpentry details of its roof and the details of its fireplaces.

Later works. In the 18th or 19th centuries the majority of the roof of the shippon was removed and replaced, leaving one bay only of the original 14th-century roof intact. The first-floor chambers were ceiled at or near collar level and the northern part of the roof was also replaced. At some point, perhaps in the late 18th or early 19th century, the putative porch chamber was demolished and a number of lean-to structures were built against the east wall of the house. The house may have been ‘reversed’ at this time, so that the western entrance to the cross passage, away from the farmyard, became its principal entrance. Alternatively, this alteration may have been made in the later 19th century, when the house was divided into two tenements. At this period the inner room may finally have been ceiled, creating the inner room chamber, though evidence for any historic floor remains elusive. Finally, the cross passage was enclosed from the shippon by a late 19th- or early 20th-century screen. In the late 20th and 21st centuries the house was acquired in two phases by Devon County Council, and remains subdivided into two parts, one of which is still occupied as a private dwelling.

The longhouse at Higher Uppacott is justly famous for its unconverted shippon, and perhaps also for the early date of the surviving truss over the shippon, which may date from the early 14th century. These features give the impression of a house that was rarely altered throughout its history and which, because it was perhaps slow to respond to changes in fashion and advances in domestic comfort, has preserved to an unusual extent the form of a typical Dartmoor longhouse of the Middle Ages. The Keystone report of 2004 interpreted the house as having some features rather in advance of the times, including lime plaster partitions and roof trusses with notched lap joints; these were interpreted as dating from the 16th century, an early date for such features. The recent works, based on observations of fabric which were not available to Keystone, have revealed both a simpler history of development, summarised above, but also a more unexpected story, in which the high-status parts of the house, the hall and hall chamber were remodelled before the conversion of the inner room, which, most unusually, remained open to the roof and heated by an open fire during the greater part of the history of the house.

The conversion of the hall in to two storeys prior to the conversion of the inner room is unusual in Devon farmhouses, yet it is the authors’ contention that this conclusion is inescapable given the clear relationship of the hall jetty with the inner room and the smoke blackening of the roof of the parlour wing. The evidence for the continued use of the inner room as an open volume, heated by an open hearth, suggest that it, rather than the hall, remained in use for cooking and dirty, domestic activities, whereas the hall, from the 16th century at least, became a prestigious reception and dining room. Although evidence for an inner room remaining open after the hall had been ceiled is rare, un-storeyed kitchens rising into an open roof are recognised as a common feature of medieval gentry houses. Given the tendency of socially-aspiring merchants and farmers to mimic the customs and manners of the gentry, it is perhaps not improbable to imagine a Dartmoor farmer improving his hall by the addition of a fireplace and chamber over, while the less public areas of the house, the shippon and the service room, remained in their medieval form, open to the roof and blackened by soot from open hearths. Unstoreyed kitchens

associated with floored halls and chambers are known to the author from at least two other vernacular houses in Devon: Pixie Cottage at Alphington and, possibly, Powlesland Farm at South Tawton (See EA Project 6668, RWP Report dated 7th Oct 2008, and RWP Report 2016-01). It is conceivable that there are many more vernacular houses in Devon in which the traditional interpretation of the flooring over of the service room preceding that of the hall should perhaps be reviewed.

SITE ARCHIVE

The site records have been compiled into a fully integrated site archive which is currently held at Oakford Archaeology's offices under project number 1259, pending deposition with the ADS. Details of the building recording, including a pdf copy of the final report will be submitted to the on-line archaeological database OASIS (oakforda1-229549).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was commissioned by the DNPA and administered for OA by Marc Steinmetzer. It was monitored for DNPA by Keith McKay. The building recording was carried out by R. W. Parker and the fieldwork by Marc Steinmetzer. The drawings for this report were prepared by M. Steinmetzer. The authors wish to thank Keystone for their assistance throughout the project.

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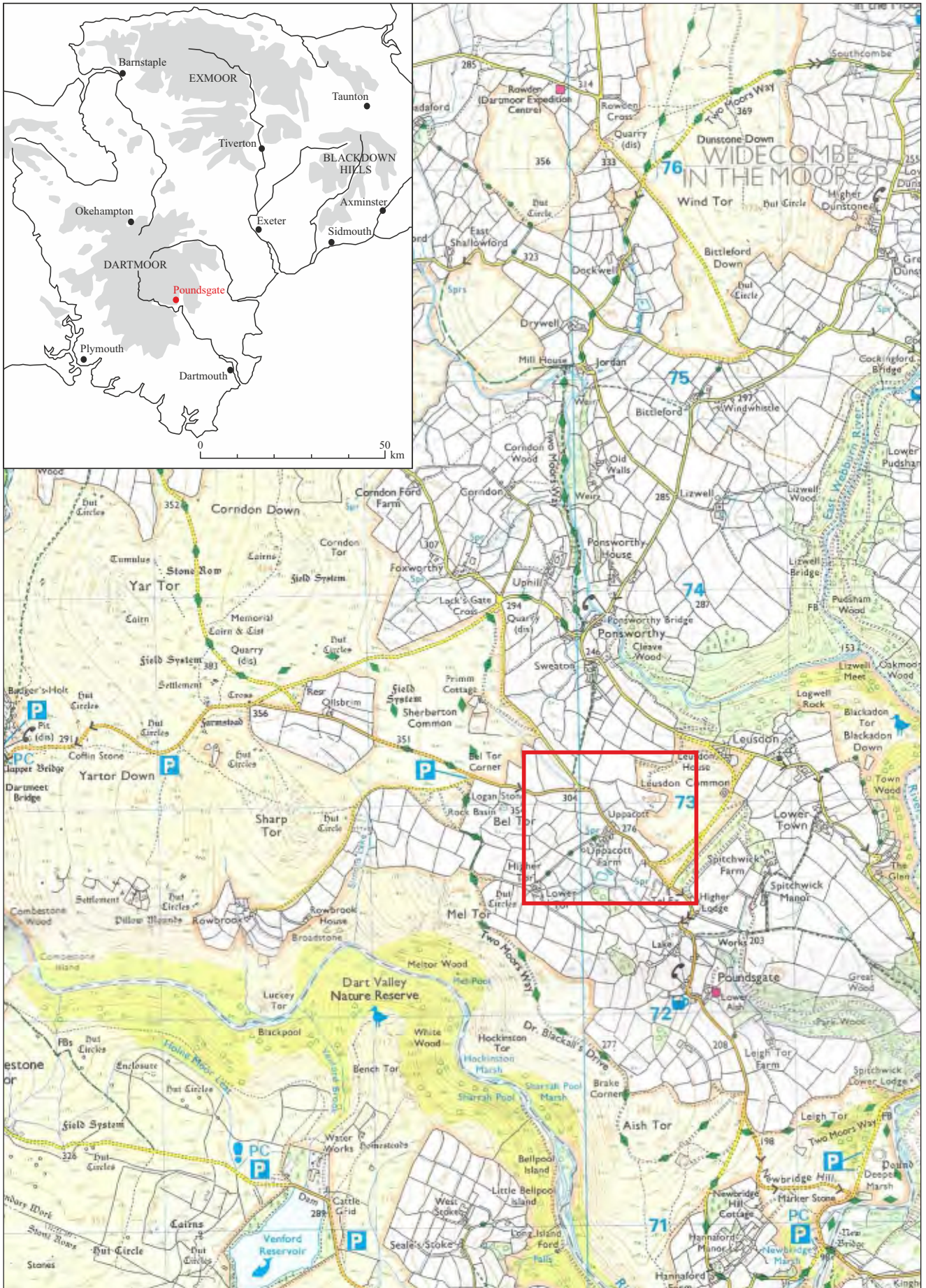


Fig. 1 Location of site.



Fig. 2 Detail from the 1844 Widecombe Tithe map.

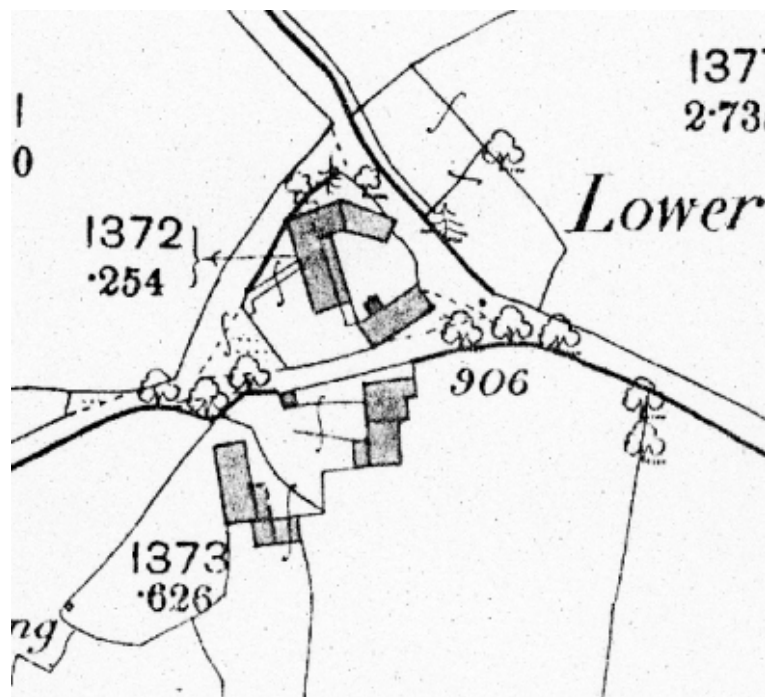


Fig. 3 Detail from the 1886 1st edition Ordnance Survey map.



Fig. 4 Plan of ground floor showing location of observations during renovation work and suggested phases of development.

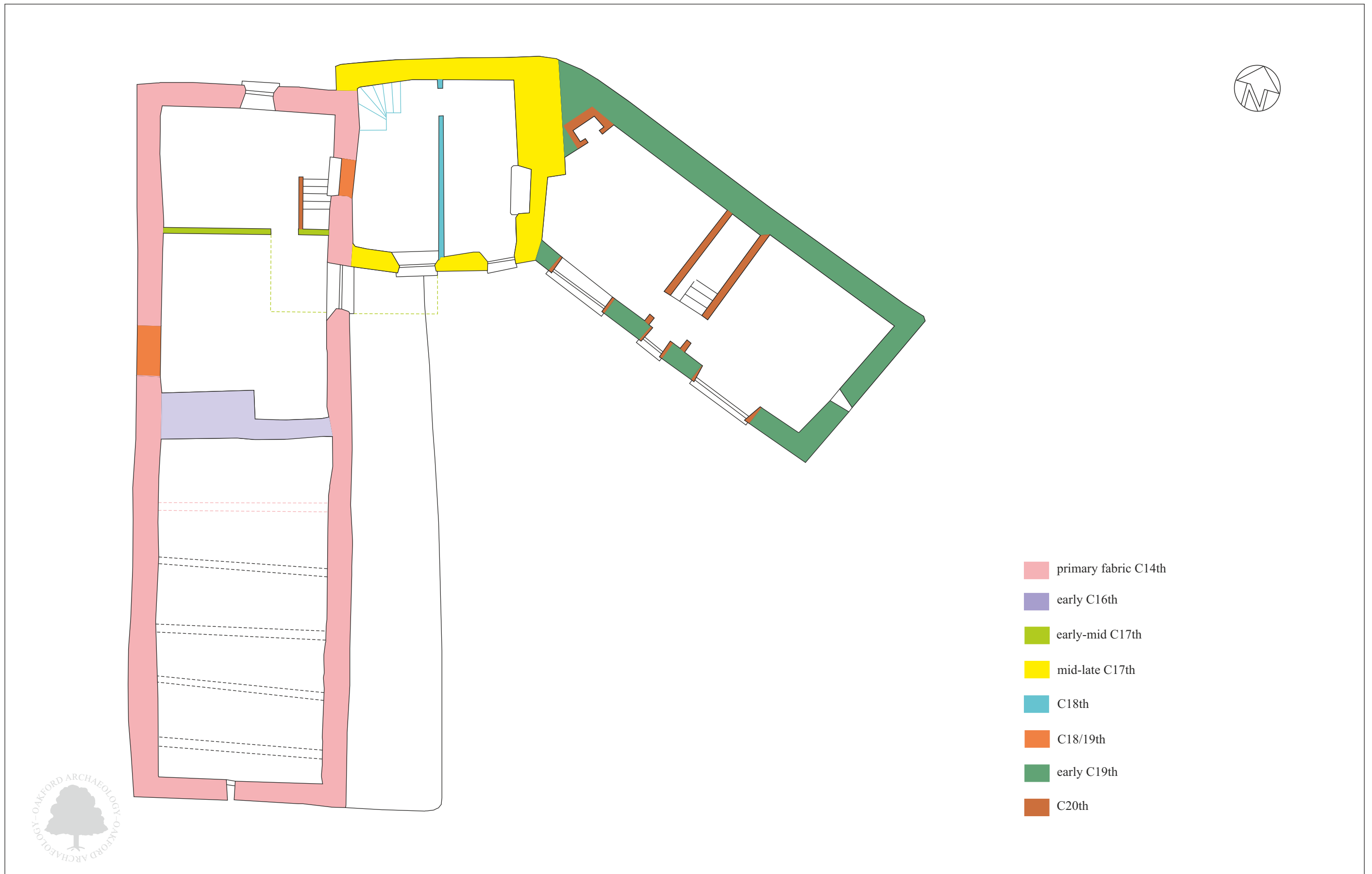
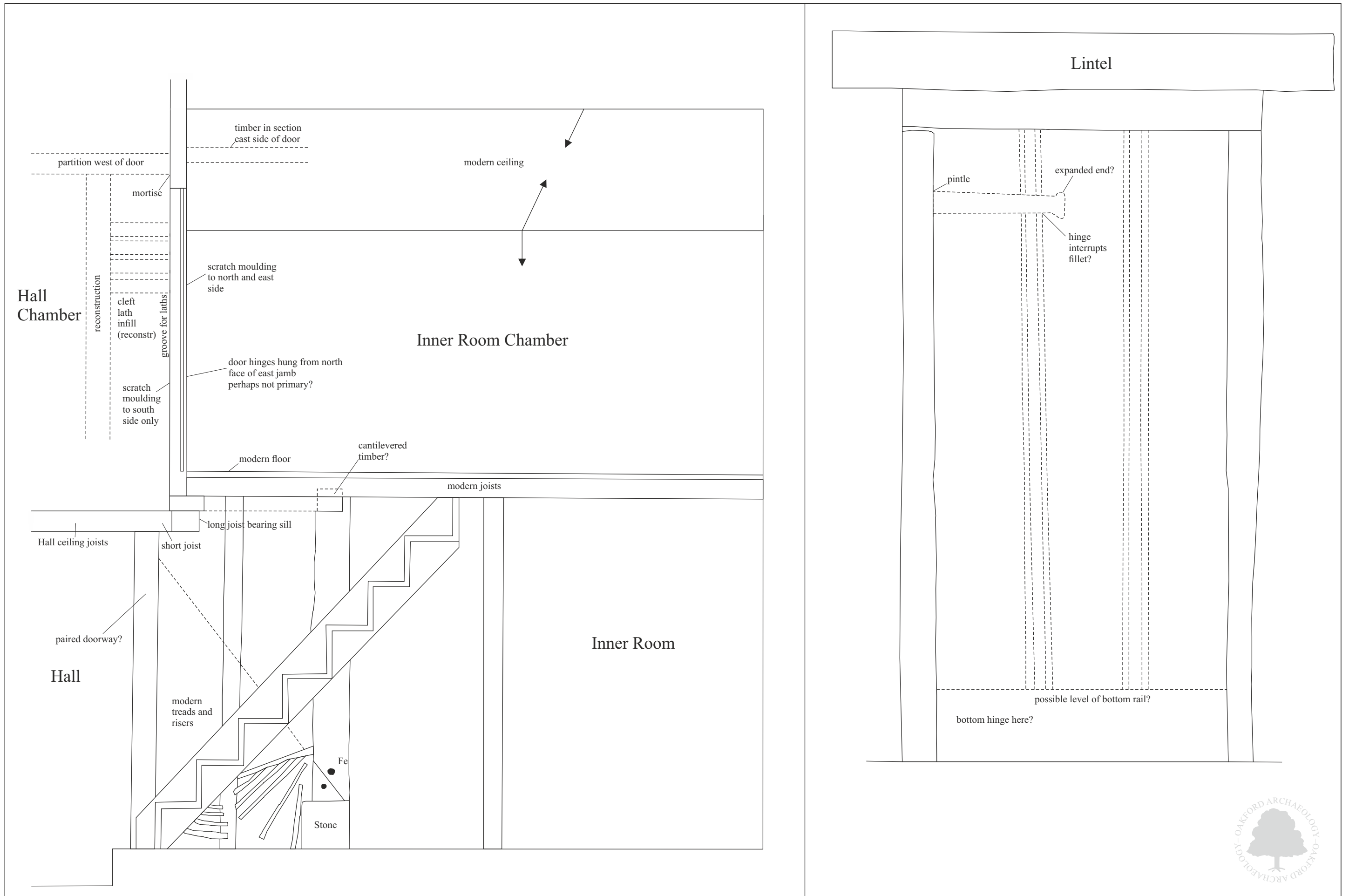


Fig. 5 Plan of first floor showing location of observations during renovation work and suggested phases of development.



Figs. 6 and 7 Elevations showing jetty and stair arrangement and impression of door in blocking.



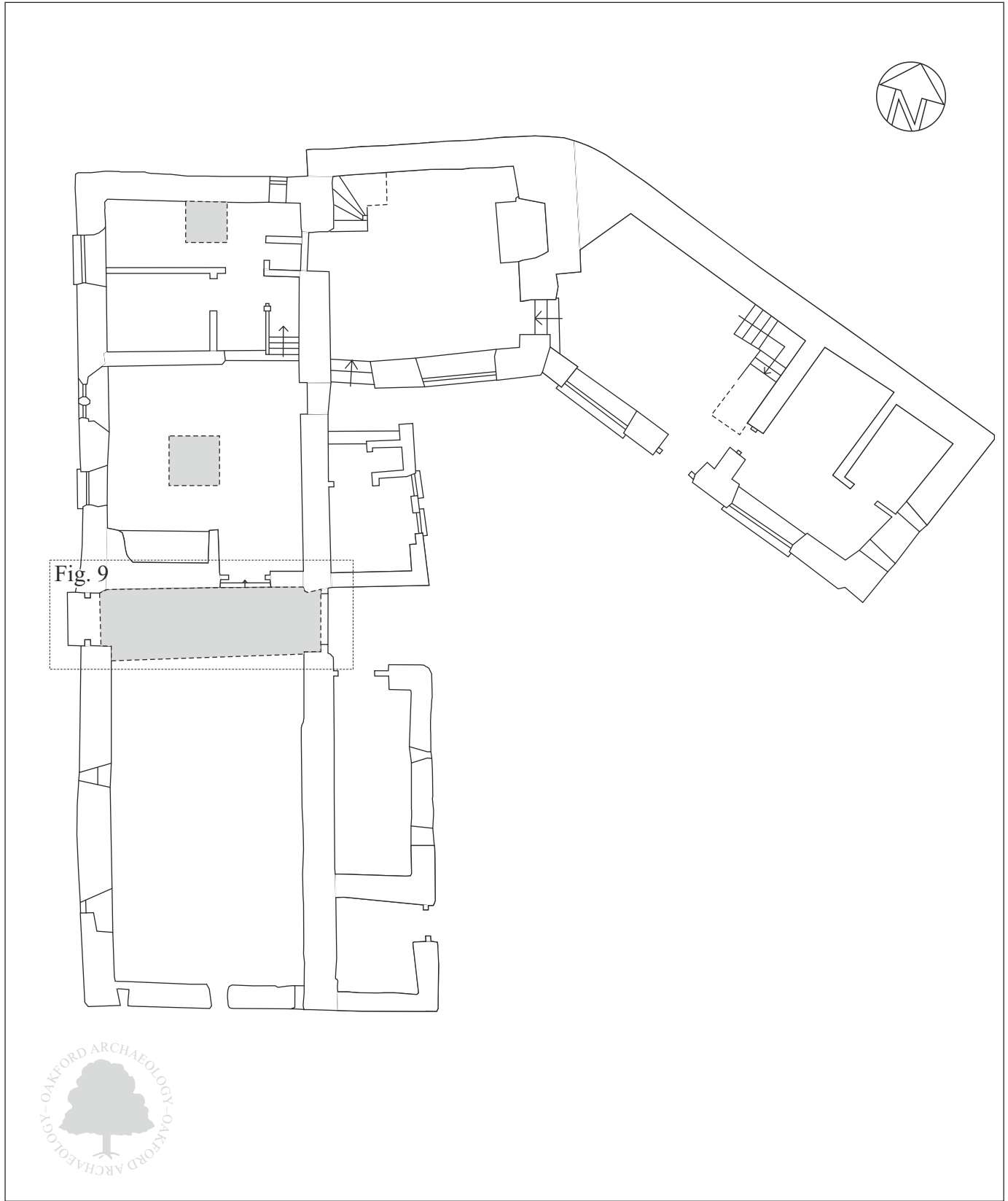


Fig. 8 Plan of ground floor showing location of excavations.



Fig. 9 Plan of cross-passage showing cobbled surface exposed underneath later concrete floor.



Pl. 1 Demolition works in the inner room, showing the tanking of the north wall behind the modern walling. 1m scale. Looking southeast.



Pl. 2 The inner room after stripping, showing the absence of any sockets for an earlier floor level. 1m scale. Looking west.



Pl. 3 Detail of the jetty over the doorway from the inner room to the hall, showing alternating long and short joists beneath the jetty. Looking south.



Pl. 4 Detail of the construction of the jetty showing the longer ends of alternate joists beneath the jetty towards the inner room. Looking southeast.



Pl. 5 View of the hall following the removal of modern finishes. 1m scale. Looking west.



Pl. 6 Detail of the blocked main doorway to the hall, showing the imprint of a 16th- or 17th-century door with applied vertical fillets. 1m scale. Looking east.



Pl. 7 View of the north end of the hall following the demolition of the modern bench. 1m scale. Looking north.



Pl. 8 View of the cross passage following the demolition of the modern partition, showing the granite ashlar of the inserted chimney. 1m scale. Looking west.



Pl. 9 View of the cross passage prior to the demolition of the modern screens. 1m scale. Looking west.



Pl.10 View of the modern screens in the shippon, now demolished. 1m scale. Looking north.



Pl. 11 View of the cross passage showing sockets for the beams supporting a sleeping platform over its western part. 1m scale. Looking southwest.



Pl. 12 General view of rough cobbled surface in cross-passage. 1m scale. Looking east.



Pl. 13 General view of rough cobbled surface in cross-passage. 1m scale. Looking west.



Pl. 14 Close-up of tightly packed cobbles behind eastern cross-passage door. 1m scale. Looking southeast.



Pl. 15 View of the shippon following the demolition of the modern partition. Looking north.



Pl.16 Detail of the area beneath the staircase, showing the diagonal socket and the stone plinth and post. the trowel is added for scale. Looking west.



Pl. 17 View of the hall chamber showing the stud partition separating the room from the upper part of the inner room. 1m scale. Looking north.



Pl. 18 View of the roof space above the hall chamber, looking north, showing smoke blackening on the inner face of the partition.



Pl. 19 Detail of the doorway to the hall chamber, seen from the north, showing the scratch mouldings and the tenon of the head beam of the spere.



Pl. 20 View of the 19th-century staircase in the parlour wing, showing a timber newel within a confined space. S similar structure may have risen within the inner room. Looking north.



Pl. 21 View of the early 14th-century truss at the north end of the shippon.



Pl. 22 Detail of the additional rafter added over the eastern principal of the earlier 17th-century truss (looking south-east), showing smoke blackening to both timbers.



Pl. 23 The northern end of the roof, looking north, showing a smoke blackened purlin over the inner room.



Pl. 24 View of the roof over the parlour wing, looking east, showing smoke blackened trusses of probable 17th-century date.

Appendix 1: Method statement

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This document has been produced by Oakford Archaeology (OA) for the Dartmoor National Park Authority. The document sets out the methodology to be used during building recording and archaeological monitoring and recording at Higher Uppacott, Poundsgate, Devon (SX 7013 7287). The work is to be carried out to satisfy condition nos. 3 and 4 respectively attached to the grant of listed building consent and planning permission (0032/15 and 0033/55) for refurbishment and repairs, rethatching and removal of inappropriate late 20th century repairs or alterations. The present document represents the 'written scheme of archaeological work' required for approval by Dartmoor National Park Authority prior to commencement of the work.
- 1.2 Higher Uppacott is a Grade I Listed Longhouse with early 14th century origins. The northeast wing was probably added in the 17th century, while the former outbuilding to south-west were likely added in the 18th or early 19th century.

The main house retains its 3-room and through-passage plan, with the shippon to the right of the passage, and the hall and inner room to the left. The northeast wing was probably a parlour or kitchen. The shippon is rare among standing longhouses in having no separate entrance. The building has 2 storeys, while the shippon was formerly lofted.

2. AIMS

- 2.1 The aim of the project is to ensure the adequate recording of any historic fabric exposed and to investigate and record any buried archaeological deposits exposed during groundworks associated with the development, to inform details of the proposed works and to report on the results of the project, as appropriate.

3. METHOD

Guidance on the scope of work required under this condition was provided by e-mail dated 30-06-2015 by the Dartmoor National Park Authority Archaeology Officer (DNPA AO).

Liaison will be established with the client and their contractors prior to works commencing in order to advise on OA requirements in relation to the works outlined below. If a good working relationship is established at the outset any delays caused by archaeological recording can be kept to a minimum. However, localised delays to site operations may be caused and time should be allowed within the main contractor's programme for the adequate investigation and recording of archaeological material and exposed historic building fabric.

Building recording

- 3.1 Historic building recording will be undertaken by a suitably qualified historic buildings specialist (Richard Parker). All monitoring and recording will be carried out as per OA standard recording procedures and in accordance with the standards of the Institute for Archaeology (*Standards and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*, 1996, revised 2008).
- 3.2 Observations will be recorded by means of a written description on watching brief record sheets, annotation of existing architect's plans, and black and white print and colour digital photographs. Detailed scale drawings will be made of any architectural features or exposed details of particular significance that cannot be recorded by the above means.
- 3.3 The above-ground building works will entail:

Hall

- the opening up of the previously blocked doorway on the east side of the hall and within the dining room. This will be monitored with the stone blocking and further exposure of historic building fabric recorded by the attending archaeologist during the opening. Depending on what is revealed recording as per the above methodology (3.2), although this may be reviewed with the DNPA AO once the doorway is opened up;
- the removal of the Newtonite lathing damp-proofing membrane, plaster and plasterboard dry-lining from the internal faces of the walls. The historic fabric and structural breaks within the walls will be recorded as per the above methodology (3.2);
- the removal of plasterboard lining and plaster infill on the underside of the ceilings. This, and the paint analysis, will be monitored to record the underside of the original floorboards, joists and beams;
- the removal of the softwood boarded bench and the Newtonite lathing damp-proofing membrane, plaster and plasterboard dry-lining. The historic fabric and structural breaks within the walls will be recorded as per the above methodology (3.2);

Inner Room

- the removal of modern blockwork and internal partitions. This will be monitored and exposure of historic building fabric recorded by the attending archaeologist. The historic fabric and structural breaks within the walls will be recorded as per the above methodology (3.2);
- the removal of ceiling and boxing, and exposure of joist ends still morticed to cill beam. This will be monitored and recorded by the attending archaeologist to inform the size, profile and mortice detail of new joists;

Hall Chamber

- the removal of chipboard over the flooring and support joists. This will be monitored and exposure of historic beams and joists recorded by the attending archaeologist for earlier structures, including possible smoke hood or hot box above the fireplace. Any evidence could be interpreted with drawings and/or sketch illustrations to add to the museum experience;

Cross Passage

- Removal of timber partition wall between cross passage and shippon including ceiling structure.

Groundworks

3.4 The below-ground works will include:

Shippon

- the removal of cement infill to cobbled floor and central drain within the Shippon. This will be monitored and the stone layout recorded by the attending archaeologist during the excavation. Provision will be made in the contractors schedule for sufficient time and access for the archaeologist to complete any necessary recording. This may cause localised delays to the groundworks programme, although every effort will be made to keep any such delays to a minimum;

Cross-passage

- the removal of the concrete levelling screed in the cross-passage. This will be monitored and the stone layout recorded by the attending archaeologist during the excavation. Provision will be made in the contractors schedule for sufficient time and access for the archaeologist to complete any necessary recording. This may cause localised delays to the groundworks programme, although every effort will be made to keep any such delays to a minimum;

Hall

- the removal of the concrete infill to the original lime ash floor in the hall, and any possible further reduction in level of the ground below. The clearance of the concrete infill will be monitored by the attending archaeologist, to help identify the make-up and materials, and any archaeological deposits beneath.

General project method

3.5 If present any environmental deposits will be assessed on site by a suitably qualified archaeologist, with advice as necessary from Allen Environmental Archaeology or the English Heritage Regional Science Advisor, to determine the possible yield (if any) of environmental or microfaunal evidence, and its potential for radiocarbon dating. If deposits potential survive, these would be

processed by Geoflow using the EH Guidelines for Environmental Archaeology (EH CfA Guidelines 2002/1), and outside specialists (AEA) organised to undertake further assessment and analysis as appropriate.

- 3.6 Initial on-site cleaning, conservation, packaging and any stabilisation will be undertaken by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with relevant professional guidance (including *Conservation guidelines No 1* (UKIC, 2001); *First Aid for Finds* (UKIC & RESCUE, 1997) and on advice provided by A Hopper-Bishop, Specialist Services Officer, RAM Museum, Exeter.
- 3.7 Should artefacts be exposed that fall within the scope of the Treasure Act 1996, then these will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner according to the procedures relating to the Act. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery suitable security measures will be taken to protect the finds from theft.
- 3.8 Should any articulated human remains be exposed, these will initially be left *in situ*. If removal at either this or a later stage in the archaeological works is deemed necessary, these will then be fully excavated and removed from the site subject to the compliance with the relevant Ministry of Justice Licence, which will be obtained by OA on behalf of the client. Any remains, including cremated remains, will be excavated in accordance with Institute of Field Archaeologist Technical Paper No. 13 (McKinley and Roberts 1993). Where appropriate bulk samples will be collected.
- 3.9 The project will be organised so that specialist consultants who might be required to conserve artefacts or report on other aspects of the investigations can be called upon (see below).
- 3.10 Health and Safety requirements will be observed at all times by archaeological staff working on site, particularly when machinery is operating nearby. Personal protective equipment (safety boots, helmets and high visibility vests) will be worn by staff when plant is operating on site. A risk assessment will be prepared prior to work commencing.
- 3.11 The DNPA Archaeology Officer (DNPA AO) will be informed of the start of the project, and will monitor progress throughout on behalf of the planning authority and will wish to inspect the works in progress. Any amendments to the specific responses and methods set out elsewhere in this document will be reviewed and agreed with him prior to implementation and completion. A date of completion of all archaeological site work, including historic building recording, will be confirmed with the DNPA AO and the timescale of the completion of items under section 5 will run from that date.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

- 4.1 For the groundworks, the standard Oakford Archaeology recording system will be employed, consisting of:

(i) standardised single context record sheets; survey drawings, plans and sections at scales 1:10, 1:20, 1:50 as appropriate;

(ii) black-and-white print and colour digital photography;

(iii) survey and location of finds, deposits or archaeological features, using EDM surveying equipment and software where appropriate; and

(iv) labelling and bagging of finds on site from all excavated levels, post-1800 unstratified pottery may be discarded on site with a small sample retained for dating evidence as required.

4.2 For the historic building recording observations will be recorded by means of a written description on watching brief record sheets, annotation of existing architect's plans, and black and white print and colour digital photographs. Detailed scale drawings will be made of any architectural features or exposed details of particular significance that cannot be recorded by the above means.

5. REPORTING AND ARCHIVING

5.1 The reporting requirements will be agreed with the DNPA AO on completion of fieldwork.

5.2 The results of all phases of archaeological work and historic building recording will be presented within one summary report within six months of the date of completion of all archaeological fieldwork. The summary report will contain the following elements as appropriate:

- A site location plan at an appropriate scale, and a plan of the site showing the location of the recorded building observations and archaeological features;
- a written description of the exposed historic fabric and a discussion and interpretation of their character and significance in the context of any locally available historical evidence from any nearby sites and historic mapping;
- Phased and annotated floor plans, along with copies of other drawn records (elevations, cross sections, etc) as appropriate to illustrate features of historic or architectural interest and/or the development of the building;
- Photographs of features of significant archaeological, historic or architectural interest;
- if necessary, an assessment of what further work is necessary to analyse and publish any particularly significant finds and/or results;
- a written description of the exposed features and deposits and a discussion and interpretation of their character and significance in the context of the known history of the site;
- plans and sections at appropriate scales showing the exact location and character of significant archaeological deposits and features;
- a selection of photographs illustrating the principal features and deposits found;

- specialist assessments and reports as appropriate.
- 5.3 A .pdf version of the summary report will be produced and distributed to the Client and the DNPA AO on completion of sitework within the timescale above (5.2). A copy of the report and .pdf version will also be deposited with the site archive.
- 5.4 An ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared with reference to *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991 2nd edition) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*, English Heritage, 2006) upon completion of the project.

The archive will consist of two elements, the artefactual and digital - the latter comprising all born-digital data and digital copies of the primary site records and images. This will be deposited with the ADS while any retained artefacts will be deposited with the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in accordance with their current conditions of deposit (RAMM reference number *pending*) within 12 months of the completion of site work, or thereafter when the RAMM reopens for new deposits. A retention and discard strategy will be agreed with the RAMM after the finish of site work, when it is clear what has been found, but before any processing of the material for archiving (other than cleaning).

- 5.5 A .pdf copy of the updated summary report will be submitted, together with the site details, to the national OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological investigationS) database within four months of the completion of site work.
- 5.6 A short report summarising the results of the project will be prepared for inclusion within the “round up” section of an appropriate national journal, if merited, within 12 months of the completion of site work.
- 5.7 Any amendments to the method or timescale set out above will be agreed in writing with the DNPA AO before implementation.

6. COPYRIGHT

- 6.1 OA shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in this document.

7. PROJECT ORGANISATION

- 7.1 The groundworks will be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced OA archaeologists, in accordance with the Code of Conduct and relevant standards and guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (*Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation*, 1994, revised 2008, and *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, 1994, revised 2008), plus *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* 1994, revised

2008), and the and the historic building recording and reporting by Richard Parker, in accordance with the Code of Conduct and relevant standards and guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (*Standards and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*, 1996, revised 2008). The project will be managed for OA by M. Steinmetzer MCIFA, who produced this document.

Health & Safety

- 7.2 All monitoring works within this scheme will be carried out in accordance with current *Safe Working Practices (The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974)*.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Specialist contributors and advisors

The expertise of the following specialists can be called upon if required:

Historic and archaeological research: John Salvatore;

Bone artefact analysis: Ian Riddler;

Dating techniques: University of Waikato Radiocarbon Laboratory, NZ;

Building specialist: Richard Parker;

Illustrator: Sarnia Blackmore;

Charcoal identification: Dana Challinor;

Diatom analysis: Nigel Cameron (UCL);

Environmental data: Vanessa Straker (English Heritage), AEA, AC;

Faunal remains: Charlotte Coles;

Finds conservation: Alison Hopper-Bishop (Exeter Museums);

Human remains: Charlotte Coles;

Lithic analysis: Dr. Linda Hurcombe (Exeter University);

Medieval and post-medieval finds: John Allan;

Metallurgy: Gill Juleff (Exeter University);

Numismatics: Norman Shiel (Exeter);

Petrology/geology: Roger Taylor (RAM Museum), Imogen Morris;

Plant remains: Julie Jones (Bristol);

Prehistoric pottery: Henrietta Quinnell (Exeter);

Roman finds: Paul Bidwell & associates (Arbeia Roman Fort, South Shields);

Others: Wessex Archaeology Specialist Services Team, Oxford Archaeology.